

DISCLOSURE OF CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED
SPENDING ITEMS

I certify that the information required by rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate related to congressionally directed spending items has been identified in the committee report which accompanies S. 1436 and that the required information has been available on a publicly accessible congressional Web site at least 48 hours before a vote on the pending bill.

COMMENDING THE CREW OF STS-
125

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, today I wish to congratulate and honor the crew of STS-125, who conducted NASA's fifth and final mission to the Hubble Space Telescope earlier this year. The crew—Commander Scott D. Altman, Pilot Gregory C. Johnson and mission specialists John M. Grunsfeld, Michael J. Massimino, Andrew J. Feustel, Michael T. Good and Megan McArthur—brilliantly executed a mission that included an unprecedented five spacewalks in 5 consecutive days to install two new instruments, repair two others and add necessary upgrades to extend the life of the Hubble. Most importantly, they returned safely to Earth.

I would like to specifically acknowledge Dr. Grunsfeld, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for many years. Prior to the mission, the New York Times referred to Dr. Grunsfeld as the “keeper of the Hubble” because of his long commitment to the program, including three servicing missions. I cannot imagine a better caretaker. Without him, the Hubble would not be the unparalleled success it is today. I am also thrilled that Dr. Grunsfeld will be joining the faculty of the University of Colorado at Boulder after an extraordinary career at NASA.

I had the pleasure of meeting with the crew last week. We talked about the marathon spacewalks needed to install upgrades to Hubble that often required on-the-spot improvisation by the astronauts. It is a testament to the crew's professionalism, teamwork and resourcefulness that the spacewalks were so successful given such challenging conditions. We also discussed what each astronaut will be doing next—most will be returning to the astronaut corps awaiting their next mission—and how the microgravity of space adds an inch or more to your height. I appreciate the time they gave me and am always honored to visit with these extraordinary Americans.

It isn't widely known, but the State of Colorado and NASA have deep connections. The University of Colorado receives more research funding from NASA than any other university. Colorado enjoys the second largest aerospace economy in the country, behind only California, including significant endeavors in both civilian and military aerospace. After this final servicing mission, which added the cosmic origins spectrograph and widefield camera

3 to the Hubble, every scientific instrument on the Hubble Space Telescope has been made by Boulder, Colorado-based Ball Aerospace. Ball also built the corrective optics to fix the telescope's flawed vision upon installation in 1993. Ball Aerospace played an essential part in the Hubble story, and I am extremely proud of the contributions it has made to Hubble's success.

We should not forget that there was a time when it appeared this mission would never occur. Following the Space Shuttle *Columbia* tragedy, NASA initially decided to cancel all further missions to Hubble, arguing that it was too risky. At the time, I was a member of the House of Representatives Science Committee's Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee, and I strongly urged NASA to reconsider its decision. I believed that we should not abandon the world's greatest scientific instrument when servicing missions were no riskier than missions to the International Space Station, which NASA was planning to continue. I was pleased that, after some deliberation, NASA changed course and decided to go forward with the final servicing mission.

Hindsight being what it is, it is easy to say that continuing the Hubble servicing mission was the right choice to make. But for me, it was always the best option. As Dr. Grunsfeld said during the mission, the Hubble is about humanity's quest for knowledge. Over the past 19 years, the Hubble Space Telescope has opened fantastic windows into the universe. With it we have seen the pillars of creation and the death throes of distant stars. We have seen signs of supermassive black holes at the centers of galaxies and evidence that our universe is expanding at an ever increasing rate. And we have found planets similar to our own orbiting stars much like the Sun, reigniting old debates that force us to ask if we are alone in this universe. That is a quest we should not easily give up.

I find it fitting that the crew of STS-125 visited Capitol Hill on the same week as the 40th anniversary of the *Apollo 11* Moon landing. For an agency that has had its fair share of tragedies and triumphs, surely the *Apollo 11* mission and the Hubble Space Telescope stand out as shining examples of the heights NASA can reach. They are arguably the agency's greatest successes in manned and unmanned space exploration.

As high water marks of the past, they also offer useful perspective on the future of NASA. NASA is at a crossroads, where we must answer questions about the future balance of manned versus unmanned space exploration, about whether we should set our sights next on the Moon, Mars or some other goal, about how to cope with completion of the International Space Station and retirement of the Space Shuttle in coming years. And we must answer all of these questions during the most difficult economic conditions of a generation. I look forward to

those debates in the Senate, but they are debates for another day.

Today is about honoring the crew of STS-125. Our thanks go out to Scott Altman, Gregory Johnson, John Grunsfeld, Michael Massimino, Andrew Feustel, Michael Good and Megan McArthur, and all of the other Hubble caretakers over the years. They have steadied Hubble's gaze, sharpened its vision and extended its reach. Thanks to them we can keep our eyes focused on the heavens, touch the face of God and learn a little more about the universe and ourselves.

COMMENDING DETROIT SHOCK

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, this afternoon, I had the pleasure of joining President Obama on the South Portico of the White House for a ceremony to honor the Detroit Shock on winning the 2008 WNBA championship. This is the third WNBA Championship in 6 years for the Shock, an outstanding accomplishment for the WNBA's first expansion franchise and one in which many across the State of Michigan take great pride. As one of only two teams to win three or more championships in the league history, the Detroit Shock is clearly a part of an elite group in the WNBA.

The Shock completed a hard fought title run with a three game sweep of the San Antonio Silver Stars, capped by a 76-60 victory in the final game before an elated home crowd. Those in attendance, as well as those in Detroit and across Michigan, were pleased with the poised performance of this veteran team. Through persistence, perseverance and hard work, this team defeated two quality opponents, the Indiana Fever and the New York Liberty, en route to earning a spot in the WNBA finals.

Led by the determined play of Katie Smith, the Shock maintained their focus throughout a grueling regular season and their ensuing march toward the 2008 WNBA title. Katie Smith averaged 21.7 points per game in the finals and won the 2008 WNBA Finals Most Valuable Player award.

This championship win was yet another milestone in the storied career of head coach Bill Laimbeer, who was at the helm of each of the Shock's championship runs. He has amassed a total of five professional basketball titles, which includes two as a player for the Detroit Pistons. This was also the sixth championship for Detroit Shock owner Bill Davidson's Detroit sports teams. Fortunately, he was able to enjoy this championship before his recent death in March.

Each member of the Detroit Shock organization made valuable contributions through the season and during this memorable championship run, including Kara Braxton, Cheryl Ford, Alexis Hornbuckle, Taj McWilliams-Franklin, Deanna Nolan, Plenetette Pier-son, Elaine Powell, Sheri Sam, Olayinka Sanni, Kelly Schumacher,